Among the brief debates which sometimes spring up near the close of a session in the Senate, the fol lowing, on the Great Steamboat Bill, evinces calm resolve and steadiness of purpose, in response to the appeals of humanity. The collision of minds in debate, with the vote which followed it, show that the Senate, whilst respectful to the rights of the minority, is also disposed carefully to protect, by the necessary legislation, the lives and limbs of the People and the interests of property.

PROTECTION TO LIFE ON STEAMBOATS.

In Senate, August 28, 1852.

Mr. DAVIS. I am instructed by the Committee on Commerce to report back to the Senate a bill to amend the act entitled "An act for the better preservation of the lives of passengers on board vessels propelled in whole or in part by steam;" and I am instructed by that committee to recommend to the Senate to agree to the numerous amendments made by the House of Representatives. Although the committee do not think that the bill has been improved by these amendments, in many respects, yet, at this late stage of the session, they think it best to concur in them. I hope the bill will now be taken up, and I will follow that action on the part of the Senate by moving a vote of concurrence in all the amendments without reading them.

Mr. GWIN. I hope the Senate will adopt the sugges tions of the Senator from Massachusetts. The amendments are very numerous, and their reading would cause

The motion to take up the bill was agreed to. Mr. DAVIS. I now move to concur in the amendments

made by the House of Representatives.

Mr. PRATT. There are somewhat more than one hundred and fifty amendments reported by the House of Re-presentatives to that bill, and we are now asked, as I understand, for a vote of concurrence in them without even hearing them read. I hold in my hand a representation from the steamboat interests of the State of Maryland, in direct opposition to this bill; and I believe that feeling is shared by the same interest along the whole of the Atlantic seaboard. They state that if the bill should pass the bill is unnecessarily severe, so far as they are con-cerned; and that it would be completely ruinous to their interests. As I represent those interests on this floor, I cannot permit this motion to pass without making a solemn protest against it. The Senator who has made it asks this body, and asks me, to vote in favor of the adoption of these amendments, one hundred and fifty in num-ber, at least, in despite of the remonstrance presented to me by the whole of the steamboat interests of my State, without even knowing what the effect of one of those amendments may be. I cannot do it, sir; and I shall ask for the yeas and nays on the motion.

The PRESIDENT. The Senator from Maryland has it

in his power to cause the question to be taken on the mendments separately.

Mr. GWIN. I wish to make an appeal to the Senator

Mr. PRATT. I am desirous that the bill should not pass, and therefore there is no use in making the appeal. because it will only be made to induce me to agree to these amendments to facilitate the passage of the bill. I cannot concur in such a step, for the reason that I have stated—that the whole of the steamboat interests are op-posed to the measure. In addition to what I have already said, I beg now to mention to the Senate that I have in said, I beg now to mention to the Senate that I have a ready my possession a resolution suggested by the steamboat owners, which I will submit for consideration. Their objection is not so much to the amendments as to the bill.

amendments if they do not understand them " Mr. PRATT. I will now offer, as a substitute for the report of the committee, the resolution to which I have alluded. Its effect is to convey an instruction to the alluded. Its effect is to convey an instruction to the of humanity, the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. Davis) quire into this question thoroughly, so far as regards for the immense labor he has bestowed upon the prepara-steamboat navigation in other sections of the country than the Western waters, and that the committee do report such a bill at the next session of Congress as may afford

came from the House of Representatives.

The PRESIDENT. The gentleman must confine him-self to the consideration of those amendments. The subject-matter of the bill is not now before the Senate. Mr. GWIN. I believe this bill to be very defective. I other Senator, pressed with business as we all are, could believe, with the Senator from Maryland, (Mr. PRATT,) be induced to read. The whole measure has been care that it will cause serious injury to the steamboat interests in his State, and in mine also. I have been notified that it will cause serious embarrassment to the steamboat owners in my State; but, notwithstanding that, I think we should have some security for life, such as this bill proposes. As it does not go into operation before next March, and as Congress will be in session some months before that time, we can then amend it, if, on mature consideration, amendment appears to be advisable. In the mean time. I am most anxious that this bill should pass, as it is evident that something of the kind is essential; and I appeal to the Senator from Maryland (Mr.

PRATT) not to persist in his opposition to the concurrence

Mr. DAVIS. I wish to say a few words in reply to the Senator from Maryland. This bill has been a long time under the consideration of the House of Representatives. It passed this body by a great majority, indicating great unanimity; and it was so passed because it was understood that there were other interests than those of the steamboatowners concerned. It was very well known what feelings many of those persons entertained on this subject; that they much preferred the law of discretion to any enactment that Congress could make; that they were desirous of having this subject entirely under their own control, to go on in what manner they pleased, with a reck-less disregard for human life, rather than have any legislation whatever. The bill, after much consideration went to the House of Representatives many weeks ago, and it has been pursued thither by some of the steamboat gentlemen, who, to my certain knowledge, have been treated with the utmost consideration, and the greatest respect paid to their wishes, so far as they were reason-The consequence is, that the character and tone of the bill have been so much lowered by amendments adopted by the House of Representatives that it has lost much of its efficiency, and I fear it will not answer the purpose for which it was designed. It is not sufficiently stringent, as it has been returned to us, for the protection of life and property. The foundations of the bill have not been disturbed, it is true, but the terms have been altered, and the tone abated to such a degree as very much to impair, in my judgment, its useful charac-

in every shape, and appear to desire no law but the law of discretion, which is the right to expose life to imminent peril, and often to destruction. If the Senate is willing to permit such a state of things to exist, be it so. My own opinion is that we had better adopt the bill as it came from the House of Representatives; and as it do the approaching session of Congress, if it should appear to be too stringent in regard to the property of steamboat In this connexion I will say, in justice to the committees of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, that at every step, and under all circumstances, they paid the most scrupulous regard to the rights of property. This point was never lost sight of for a moment, and some of the provisions complained of were adopted to re-

That change has been made as a concession to those

interests which the Senator from Marvland (Mr. Pratt)

lieve property from burdens as far as possible. The various forms in which boats and machinery are constructed make a large discretion in the inspectors necessary to meet each case, and to prevent a sacrifice of property by the exercise of a sound discretion conforming to the circumstances which exist. Most of the owners of steam tonnage have behaved with a becoming liberality. while some have been governed by views peculiar to themselves. Forgetting that a law cannot be made for individuals, but must be general, they require an impossibility, by urging upon Congress to make a law for the reckless, while it must not extend to the prudent. In my opinion the prudent have nothing to fear from this act. They are timid without cause, and not sufficiently mindful of the terrible disasters which frequently occur. It is but a few days since seventy persons perished by drowning, while the bow of the boat Henry Clay rested upon the shore. Such were the disastrous consequences for the want of suitable means to extingush fire! Such pain-

while making the suggestion.

Mr. DAVIS. The proposition made by the gentleman has been considered; but it is supposed by some of the riends of this bill that it still contains much of good, and they are of opinion that this is the time for action. Those gentlemen who came here from the West, and whose advice and assistance in framing the bill have been of much value, might not be able to return at the next session. If it should be permitted to die for the present session, it will then be placed in a hopeless condition, and it will be almost impossible to revive it. This is no doubt what some desire, but we are anxious to obtain the good which the bill contains, and to secure the means it affords of giving some security to life and property. If it should appear that amendments are desirable, it will be as easy to obtain them hereafter as to take up the postponed bill

Mr. HALE. I have not as yet said any thing respecting this bill, but I understand that it is a very important one. I have the declarations of its friends for that opinion. The Senator from Texas, (Mr. Rusk,) I believe, stated that it was of as much importance as any of the appropriation bills. Well, there are one hundred and fifty amendments to it reported to us by the House of Representatives, and we have no time to read, much less to corridor them. to consider them. Under these circumstances. I think there is much force in the suggestion of the Senator from Maryland, (Mr. Pratt.) To test the sense of the Senate, therefore, I move a postponement till the second Tuesday in December, and that it be made the special order for that day.

The PRESIDENT. The motion of the Senator from New Hampshire is not strictly in order.

Mr. HALE. Then I move to lay it on the table, and

I ask for the yeas and nays.

Mr. RUSK. I hope that the Senator from New Hampshire will withdraw his motion to lay the bill on the table.

Mr. HALE. I will do so if you will renew it.

Mr. RUSK. I will do so. Mr. BADGER. I ask the Senator from Texas to allow me to call attention to the rule upon this subject. It is very questionable whether this bill could be taken up at next session of Congress under the joint rule. rule is this:

"After six days from the commencement of a second subsequent session of Congress, all bills, resolutions, or re-ports, which originated in either house, and at the close of the next preceding session remained undetermined in either house, shall be resumed and acted on in the same manner as if an adjournment had not taken place."

Now, I think it is very questionable whether the rule jection is not so much to the amendments as to the bill.

To that they object in toto. They do not object to the amendments specifically. The object and the scope of which had passed the Senate and House of Representatives, and which remained on the table, not on a question of passage, but solely on a question of concurring in Mr. JONES, of Iowa. Why do they object to the doubtful whether, under the rule, the bill could be taken

This is the only country in the world which has not

such a bill at the next session of Congress as may anount adequate protection to travellers, without destroying the steamboat interests on the Atlantic sea-board.

The PRESIDENT. Isitoffered as a substitute for the bill?

Mr. PRATT. Yes, sir. Allow me to say that during would be recklessly and wantonly sacrificed to the cupi-Mr. PRATT. Yes, sir. Allow me to say that during the last forty years not a single accident has occurred on the Chesapeake bay which would render the passage of such a bill as that at present under consideration necessary, and the Senator from Massary. It is inexpedient, then, to pass this bill: but if it can be made to apply solely to that section of country where legislation is imperatively demanded, I have no objection to its passage, together with all the amendments, just as the same from the House of Representatives.

Mould be recklessly and wantonly saerificed to the cupidity of steamboat proprietors, as we have seen repeatedly is invested according to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of private property. This bill does not go into effect uncluding to his idea of law; and, if he sees of law; and, if ing all classes and interests; and, with a patience that and documents bearing on the subject as I believe no other Senator, pressed with business as we all are, could fully digested and matured by him; and now, at this late stage of the session, this bill-which, from my own knowledge of the subject, and from the information of those who are much better acquainted with it than I can profess to be, is infinitely superior to the former law upon that subject—is to be set aside for the purpose of gratifying the steamboat owners. Some of them, I have no doubt, oppose it, might and main, simply because they do not understand its provisions. They imagine that they will be required to change all the machinery in their boats at once, and consequently that the cost of the machinery now in use will be thrown away. This is a mistake. The machinery now in use will be retained, if it is of such a character as to bear the test of inspection; that which will not do so should, of course, be rejected. And all the machinery to be made for future use must be submitted

Some of the observations made to me by these steam boat proprietors are not at all creditable to them or to nature. They have avowed their determination to defeat the bill, and have raised such pairry objections as the cost of some four or five buckets which they will be compelled to supply, at something like a quarter of a dollar each, and the cost of a few axes, amounting in the whole perhaps to not quite forty dollars.

Mr. DAVIS. Not the half of that.

Mr. RUSK. I dare say my friend from Massachusetts s right-the whole will not cost more than half what I have stated. And, sir, this opposition to the bill has been characterized by such a degree of pertinacity as I have never witnessed in outside pressure before, and I have seen much of it here. Their object appears to be the defeat of all legislation on the subject, and the power of ex ercising their own uncontrolled discretion.

The question for the Senate to consider is, whether they will act in such a manner as to protect steamboat interests alone; or whether they will throw some safeguards round human life, and prevent a repetition of those lamentable catastrophes which have occurred so frequently of late The perils accompanying steamboat navigation, under the present system, are so great, and the chances of encountering an instant and horrible death are so numerous, that for my part I would rather encounter almost any risk than that with which I am threatened on the journey of some three or four thousand miles from this place to my Yet, after all these concessions have been home. However, my individual fate is a matter of n made, and they are numerous, these remonstrants are no more disposed to accept the bill now than they were at or other, and possibly I might as well go now, by the exfirst. The more considerate are willing to accept it; but plosion of a steamboat boiler, as by any other means at a there are some—I hope not many—utterly opposed to it future day; but, sir, I will candidly avow that I would rather take part in an Indian fight, ay, or enter on a long Indian campaign, than venture on undertaking this voyage of three thousand or four thousand miles, as

must, to see my wife and children once again.

Mr. HUNTER. I do not understand the bill, and wil not therefore undertake to speak on it; but remonstrance not take effect until next March, we can amend it during have been made to me by persons who represent that it will be ruinous to their interests, and especially in it operation on the Atlantic seaboard. For that reason have been desirous that it should be postponed until next session, not only in order that I may have an opportunity of examining it, and of ascertaining whether it is practica ble to pass such a measure for the security of human life, without infringing on private rights, but that it may be taken out of the way of the appropriation bills.

Mr. STOCKTON. At the risk of being considered

wanting in those sentiments of philanthropy and concern for human life which have been so eloquently and so fervently expressed by the Senator from Texas, (Mr. Rusk,) I must, with the candor becoming a Senator, say that I am opposed to most of the details of the bill now under consideration, and that I propose to discuss all the amendments made by the other House. I will endeavor to make it as consistent with my notions of the great princi-ples of human liberty and the rights of the citizen, as it s designed to be protective of human life.

Sir. "eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." are here to consider-it is our undoubted duty to consider-what is necessary to be done for the better protection of human life on steamboats. But it is likewise our duty to consider what is due to steamboat property and steamboat owners as well as what is due to the protect tion of steamboat travellers. They are all our fellowcitizens, equally entitled to our consideration. But, sir, there is a principle, in my judgment, involved in this bill the want of suitable means to exangus are: Such painful occurrences have been so frequent as to fill the public
mind with deep sensibility, and there is almost a universal
is this: how far the Federal Government, through the indemand for greater security. None but boat owners strumentality of the two houses of Congress, shall be

oppose such a step, and a very large majority of this permitted to interfere with the rights of personal proper- inquiry as to the causes of the numerous accidents, with oppose such a step, and a very large majority of this class are believed to be heartily in favor of legislation. Now is the time, now the favorable moment. Many have come here to help a law along, and we should not send them away disheartened.

Mr. PRATT. Allow me to make a suggestion for the purpose of saving time. I understand that the bill is to Now is the time, now the favorable moment. Many have come here to help a law along, and we should not send them away disheartened.

Mr. PRATT. Allow me to make a suggestion for the purpose of saving time. I understand that the bill is to go into operation in the month of March. It has been acted on by the House of Representatives; and suppose that it be now laid upon the table, under the rules, when we meet again in December, three months before it takes effect, we can take it up, and we shall then have sufficient time to consider and act upon the amendments of the ment, for instance. What man, what christian man, will not raise his voice in farce cause of temperance excite the substitute of the beneficent cause threates with which even that he beneficent cause therefore the liberty of individual beneficent cause the liberty of individual beneficent cause the liberty of individual beneficent cause the course of a single day. The we shut our eyes to the dangers with which even that is no some interest will be better promoted by taking this course that we can give all the amendments of the beneficent cause threatens the Republic? The please of the measure a constraint on the liberty of individual beneficent cause threatens the Republic? The please with the beneficent cause threatens the Republic of the measure a constraint on the liberty of individual pressure present pressed for time, and it is impossible that I am strongly opposed to. Since we are informed that the bill with have the effect of destroying the steamboat uterest in California as well as in Maryland, I think that e suggestion is entitled to some consideration from the later form Massachusetts. I feel indebted to the Seans for his kindness in permitting me to interrupt him lemma liberty in all time to come.

**Note that as a will be operative. It is utterly out of their two or three States in the course of a single day. The whether cause of temperance cause of temperance action the comes before Congress, and we are to do so whether this wholesale, aystematized process of murder are the states in the course of a single very to so the actual two or three States in the course of a single day. The whether the does not think that the public or the process of murder are at present pressed in the course of a single very to so, which ut notice and whithout and the whether this wholesale, aystematized process of murder are at present pressed in the course of a single day. The whether this wholesale, aystematized process of murder to temperance, or in the course of a single very to so to stopit in two or three States in human liberty and human dignity? Would you, to save any number of men from intemperance, reverse the de-crees of God, which require that the principles, the heart of man, should be altered, and substitute human enactments for that irreversible law, upon which alone any permanent reform may be expected? Sir, great caution should be exercised in the application of the humane principles upon which this bill is based.

When you are about adopting measures to save human life from destruction on board of steamboats, I would have you consider the value of a man's life, compared with his happiness and his liberty, with the freedom and happiness of our race. Life is transient and evanescent, but liberty and equal rights I hope will endure as long as

truth shall endure.

Sir, we ought indeed to be the guardians of liberty but it seems that we are to be not only the guardians of liberty, but to take under our charge all the men and women who choose to go on board a steamboat or not, as they see fit-ay, sir, and on board a boat which is known to be in the constant practice of racing. If a man will go on a steamboat that is not fit to carry him, because he can go for a quarter of a dollar less than by some other conveyance, are we to destroy or in any way interfere conveyance, are we to destroy or in any way interfere with the proper rights of other citizens in order to serve him? It must not be forgotten that travellers themselves are not altogether free from just repreach and responsibility in this matter—they are the principal cause of these repeated losses of life. They must, they will, go in the fastest boat; yes, sir, they will rusk to that boat which carries them speediest and cheapest. It is to their pockets they look when they select a boat, and to the Government to protect their lives when on heard. They will go ment to protect their lives when on board. They will go in any kind of boat, and with any kind of a captain, to go a little cheaper, and then, when accidents do happen, as they will in all human affairs, they burn with desire to hang the captain and owners, entirely overlooking their own responsibility in the matter, and that they have been the principal cause of the mischief by encouraging the construction of light, cheap boats.

Mr. President, I lope I entertain as strong and sincere feelings of respect for the lives of my fellow-men as any other gentleman upon this floor, but I hold it to be my imperative duty not to permit my feelings of humanity of kindness to interfere with that protection which I am bound, as a Senater of the United States, to throw around the liberty of the citizen, the investment of his property, or the management of his own business.

Sir, I raise my voice here on this occasion to say to Senators that in this chamber they have, in my judgment, done enough in past time to shake the principles of democratic freedom; and that they had best take heed lest they go so far that they never can regain what has been inconsiderately lost. Look, for example, at your census laws. Yeu have authorized federal officers to go nto the houses of your citizens and inquire into their number and condition, and when, and where, and how, they were born. Again, sir: some of the States have laws authorizing

their public officers to go into the houses of citizens and demand how much property they own and where it is; how much they owe and how much is owing to them; and other things equally offensive to the feelings of an inde-pendent freeman as it is injurious to his business. And now, sir, you want to control him in the investment and management of his property! Let me ask what will be left of human liberty if we progress on this course much further? What will be, by and by, the difference between citizens of this far-famed Republic and the seris of Rus-sia? Can a man's property be said to be his own when you take it out of his own control and put it into the hands of another, though he may be a federal officer? Can a man's property be called his own if your officer—who will certainly be a politician, and may be an irresponsible certainly be a politician, and may be an irresponsible man—has the power to determine whether that property is invested according to his idea of law; and, if he sees fit, condemn it? The steamboat property in this country is owned by a numerous and respectable class of men, and perhaps as kindhearted and humane as any of us—men, too, whose interests as well as whose feelings constrain them to look to the safety of our vessels, and to exercise a constant watchfulness put only over their own interests.

their care.
Sir, this bill will not attain the object intended. every one build his boat in his own way, but subject him to all the high responsibilities of a public servant and the motion to common carrier. If you take this kind of property out of to, as follows: the charge of those most interested in it, and put it in charge of men who have no sort of interest in it, except what they may derive from a per diem inspection, you will relieve from all responsibility very responsible par-ties, and do an inconceivable wrong to individuals and to society. Will that be right? Is it judicious? Then, again, you would apply the principles of this bill—intended, no doubt, for good, (and which, if extended only to those steamboats which run on Western waters, about which I know nothing, might be valuable)—to boats on rivers where they can almost touch the shore on both sides, and whose greatest difficulty is to keep from run-ning ashore; and this is to be done in such a way as is likely to destroy the entire interests in such boats.

But I will not press the subject any further. I have thrown out these suggestions as the ground of my hope that the further consideration of this bill may be postponed. The law is not intended to go into operation before March next; and I think that in the mean time this bill may be so guarded as not to infringe on the liberties of others, while it may afford all possible guards for the safety of human life.

Mr. DOWNS. I am sorry to occupy a moment of the precious time of the Senate; but I cannot remain silent when such strenuous opposition is made to the passage of this bill, and when the pecuniary interests of a few steamboat owners are placed in favorable contrast with our duty to protect the lives of the public. I confess that I have heard many things since I first had a seat in this body which have surprised me; but the argument against the bill just delivered by the Senator from New Jersey (Mr. STOCKTON) is the most extraordinary I ever listened to. I had thought that the jurisdiction of the United States extended over the harbors, bays, and rivers of this country; and if there was one power of Cengress which was more unquestioned than another, it was the authority to punish the crime of murder in those waters. This bill

s to punish murder, and nothing else. Mr. STOCKTON. I did not intend to deny the authority of Congress. I only intended to warn the Senate against

Mr. DOWNS. I consider that the only question involved in the bill is this: Whether we shall permit a legalized, unquestioned, unchecked, and peculiar class in the community to go on committing murder at will, or sentatives." The recurrence of the formula is ridiculous. the community to go on committing murder at will, or whether we shall make such enactments as will compel and conveys no information to the mind of a single Sethem to pay some attention to the value of life? I have no objection to concurring in the amendno hostility, or prejudices, or resentments against those persons who hold property in steamboats. On the contrary, I know that there are many honorable men among them. I know that, as a class, they may all be looked on as honorable and fair men; but I know something of their characteristics and peculiarities. Like the Senator from Texas, (Mr. Rusk,) I have had to travel much with them, and know that like all men who are constantly exposed to danger—like the warrior, the soldier, accustomed to risk life at every moment—they have become indifferent and careless to the perils with which they are constantly surrounded, and expose their own lives and the lives of others, who avail themselves of their means of travelling, recklessly and needlessly, to instant destruction. That feeling of careless hardihood I know exists among them; and, I ask, is it not time that Congress should interpose, when we hear repeatedly of the fatal consequences it entails; when we know that in two cases three hundred persons have, as one of its results, been literally murdered within the last month upon the Henry Clay and the Atlantic, and when we are informed that no less than seven hundred lives have been lost by steamboat accidents withn the last six months?

Mr. DAVIS. Allow me to mention a fact. Seventy persons perished on board the Henry Clay, when the bow of the boat was on shore, solely from the want of proper means to assist their escape.

Mr. DOWNS. I know it well, sir. Yet gentlemen here tell us that we should not interfere with private interests. I know we must treat this subject cautiously, but I tell these gentlemen that, if ever there was a subject that required the prompt and speedy action of Congress, it is that we have now under consideration. Nor is this the first time that the question has forced itself on the attenfirst time that the question has forced itself on the atten-tion of a legislative body. Some years ago a law was passed in the State of Louisiana for a similar object, and I had some experience of the manner in which it was ad-ministered. I held the office of district attorney in a

tinctly understood that I have not undertaken to deny the right of Congress to interfere, or the necessity of some interference, in regard to the safety of steamboats. What I have said is, that it is necessary to amend and to guard such a bill as that now before us from all unnecessary acroachment on the liberty or business of the citizen.

Mr. DOWNS. Guard their lives first.

Mr. STOCKTON. The bill has been altered since eft the Senate, and is now hurried along under the influ ence of humane and honorable but excited feelings.

Mr. BADGER. Not at all under excitement. Mr. STOCKTON. The course of gentlemen here proves.

Reference has been made by its friends to recent acit. Reference has been made by its friends to recent accidents, and especially to the loss of life which occurred on board the Henry Clay, in justification of this measure. With regard to that melancholy event, I must say that I believe all who know any thing about steamboat navigation will agree with me that not a single life ought to have been lost on that occasion. They had not courage enough to take care of themselves. At all events, my opinion is that to a want of self-possession the great loss of life which occurred at that time is mainly to be attributed. The boat went on shore within six or seven feet of the railroad, as we have been informed; and all that of the railroad, as we have been informed; and all that seems to have been needful for the safety of the passengers was self-command enough to get on shore from the bow, thus keeping clear of the flames; but, instead of which, they unaccountably and wildly rushed to the stern into the flames or the water. Is there any thing in this bill to prevent such a panic, such a scene?

If Senators will allow the consideration of this question

to be postponed until next session, it need not delay the practical operation of this measure in any respect, as no one proposes that it shall go into force until next March. This reasonable delay will afford an opportunity to amend the bill in some way that may be advantageous and satisfactory to all. I confess my own willingness to make some of its provisions more stringent than they now are some of its provisions more stringent than they now are. The fact is that gentlemen do not thoroughly understand the subject, and, as it is altogether a practical subject, I may be excused for saying so. It is a matter that requires great practical knowledge and experience, and should be well considered. The mere fact of a steamboat having been recently destroyed by fire is not a good reason why this bill, incomplete and ill-advised as I think it is, should be passed. The Senator from Massachu-setts (Mr. Davis) knows as well as I do that the chief cause of steamboat accidents is the use of bad and defective boilers. It is all very well to make provision as to the manner in which steamboats should be constructed and navigated, but there is something else to be looked to; and that is the manner in which the boilers are constructed, and the quality of the iron of which they are made. Where one accident arises from burning up of a boat, there are a dozen from bursting boilers. Whenever a boiler bursts, and deaths occur in consequence, the public are always excessively indignant against the owner of the boat, when, in truth, not the owner, but the ironmaster and the boiler-maker are, if

any body, responsible. The person who purchases the iron may easily be deceived. An instance of the kind happened only the other day on the Erie railroad. The iron of which one of the wheels of an engine was constructed was so bad in quality that it broke, and several cars were hurled down an embankment thirty or forty feet high. I hope Senators will consent to the postponement of this bill. I do not desire its rejection. I merely require such a delay as to enable us to modify it, and make it a reasonable bill. am willing that it should be stringent in its provisions but, at the same time, I desire that it may be intelligi ble, and that it may not interfere, more than is indispen-sable for the preservation of human life, with the rights of private property. This bill does not go into effect until next March. Why will not gentlemen allow us till the next session to perfect the bill? If this request is accorded, I will then use my best exertions to aid in maturing such a bill as will not only satisfy the Senator from Massachusetts, (Mr. Davis.) but also the Senator from Tayas. (Mr. Busk.) and the Senator from Lovies. Mr. Downs.)

For these considerations. I now move that the bill b laid on the table. The question being then taken by yeas and nays upon the motion to lay the bill on the table, it was not agreed

YEAS-Messrs. Bayard, Butler, Clemens, Hale, Hunter, YEAS—Messrs. Bayard, Butler, Clemens, Hale, Hunter, James, Pratt, and Stockton—S.

NAYS—Messrs. Adams, Atchison, Badger, Bell, Borland, Bradbury, Bright, Brooke, Cass, Charlton, Chase, Clarke, Cooper, Davis, Dawson, Dodge of Wisconsin, Dodge of Iowa, Douglas, Downs, Felch, Fish, Geyer, Hamlin, Houston, Jones of Iowa, Mangum, Mason, Meriwether, Miller, Morton, Norris, Rusk, Shields, Smith, Soule, Spruance, Sumner, Toucey, Underwood, Upham, Wade, Walker, and Weller—43. The PRESIDENT. The question now is on concurring in the amendments of the House of Representatives.

The question was then taken separately on the first four amendments, reported from the House of Representatives

and they were agreed to. Mr. BAYARD. I would remark that it is very useless pursue this course. The amendments as read by the Secretary at the desk do not convey to the mind of single Senator what effect the mere insertion or striking out of a word or words may have upon the general provisions of the bill. If the amendments are to be read, the Senate should be made aware of their import by reading the clauses as amended. But I think it is far better to take the question upon them all at once.

Mr. ATCHISON. I have one word to say. This is the same course that we pursued with the river and harbor bill; the same course that was pursued with the civil and diplomatic appropriation bill; and I will undertake to say that not half a dozen gentlemen beyond those who reported the bills knew the effect of a single amendment. We knew something about the general provisions, but no hing about the details of those bills. What could I, who have never been on the lakes, know about the appro-priations for the harbors situated there? I never saw the estimates and surveys upon which those appropriation were recommended, but was obliged to confide in those gentlemen who took the subject in hand. We have to take these things on trust, and I am prepared to swal-low this steamboat bill on trust, just as we have done

Mr. BAYARD. If the Senate choose to pass this bill without scrutinizing the amendments of the House at all, let it be so. I do not object so much to that. But it is ments of the House as a whole, if that is the wish of the

Serfate. The question was taken on the concurrence by the Senate in the amendments made to the bill by the House o Representatives, and they were agreed to.

THE RUM AND ANTI-RUM WAR, in Massacausetts, is a fierce as ever. The Boston papers have daily records of collisions in consequence of enforcing the Anti-Liquor Law, and of outrages committed upon the persons and property of its advocates. The witnesses in any suit are subjected to assaults and indignities from mobs; but they generally make the perpetrators suffer by bringing them before a magistrate. This violence does not deter the practice of giving information of violations of the liquor law; it rather increases the zeal of the friends of that measure; and one individual publicly advertises in the newspapers that he is ready to be a "spy" and "inform-er" for any person who will furnish him with legal evi-dence of violation of the law. The houses of Mr. Edwin Draper and Mr. Lewis Thayer, advocates of the law, were both visited at Worcester on Saturday night, and these gentlemen inquired for. Each received a severe blow, supposed from a stone, on going into their parlors to answer the call—the authors of the outrages escaping in both instances.

JOHN WILLIAMS, the negro whose wife was hung JOHN WILLIAMS, the negro whose wife was hung at Richmond (Va.) last Friday for the murder of Mrs. Winston and daughter, was tried for the same offence on Tuesday, found guilty, and sentenced to be executed on the 22d of October. An excited crowd was present in the court-room, who loudly applauded the verdict. Mr. Winston was called to the stand and gave in his evidence. He has nearly recovered from his wounds. He has nearly recovered from his wounds.

The Phoenix Cotton Factory, about sixteen miles from

THE INDIANS IN TEXAS.

A late number of the San Antonio Ledger has a letter from Mr. JESS E STEM, the Indian agent, which states that the late report of Camanche detake the following extracts descriptive of a portion predations at Fort Graham is entirely without foun- of the desert country through which they travelled dation. On the contrary, he says the several tribes of Indians on the line of that frontier are quite parific, and have been so for a long time.

The Houston Telegraph states that the Indians on the Brasos and Trinity are all friendly. The Tonkewas are residing near Fort Belkuap, and are in such a state of destitution that they are rather objects of commisseration than of terror. The Wacoes, under José Maria, have removed below the old village, and are raising corn a short distance from Torrey's trading-house. The Keachies and their bind red tribes are still residing at the old village, and the water at all the wells is hard and brack-

have heard his nam e mentioned that we were afraid to look in the London t ills of mortality, lest we should dis-cover him "down an ong the dead men." The newspapers there never give t's an inkling even of his illustriou pers there never give t 's an inkling even of his illustrious whereabouts, and those veracious chroniclers, "our own correspondents" of the A'merican press, have never a syllable even to throw as ay upon him. Where is he? What is he doing? How a omes on that pressing business he was in such a great hurr y to get to England to attend to? All these are inquiries that have been so frequently put here, more out of curiosit y than anxiety, that it gives us great pleasure to relieve the solicitude of those seeking for information.

for information.

We learn, then, from a passe, ager by the Europa, that the great Magyar is living in a pr ivate boarding house in a back street in London, without in the least degree troubling himself about Continenta 1 politics, the intervention question, nor the solidarity of the peoples. The French, Italian, and Hungarian exi, es with which the Protech advantage it is said, are less in the British metropolis swarms, it is said, are less in the habit of looking to him for counsel and advice now than to Mazzini. Kossuth, they argue, with a reat plausibility, has so opened the eyes of absolutism of the continent that it is morally and physically impossible that any scheme for the revival of revolution can succeed under his management. His speeches and hars gues in the United States, they say, have only had the effect to show Kings and Princes their weak places, and to put them

upon their guard against popular innovations, as pointed out and enforced by Kossuth. As a leader, therefore, his prestige, his influence, his name is gone.

The London police, nevertheless, are instructed to keep a sharp eye on the movements of "the Magyar." But, so far, they have had no occasion to interfere with him; taking it for granted that he is no longer in the confilence of the exiles in England, as we have stated. believed he has means enough at his command to enable him and his family to spend the rest of their days in peace and comfort, private residents of Londo New York Express.

HAYNAU DEFENDING HIMSELF .- Gen. Haynau is in Paris, where he has met so many rebuffs that at a dinner party one day, when a French officer complimented his military skill, he made a speech in reply, saying in the cours of it-

"I had intended to leave to history the task of doing me justice, but I am thankful to you, sir, for giving me this opportunity of contradicting an infamous calumny. It is quite true that a female was flogged. The Countes: on the abdication of the predecessor of my Emperor, in order to express her joy, had a figure representing him dressed up, and with her entire household went through the farce of interment, with the most outrageous

sults to that illustrious personage.
"The captain chef d'escadron, who was in the place hearing of the affair, arrested the countess and ordered her to be flogged. This is true; but I declare, on the honor of a soldier, which I hold sacred, that when this occurred I was at a distance of sixty leagues from the place, and when I heard of it I expressed disapprobation of the conduct of that officer, and placed him under arrest." After some further explanations, Gen. Haynau observed that he had been spoken of as a severe and harsh man. He would admit, he said, that he had shown severity, but it was in the conscientious performance of his duty. He was at the head of brave troops, ardently devoted to their sovereign, and it became him to act with energy as the best means of bringing to a close a war in which theyhad so many difficulties to contend with. "I regard
war," he added, "as the greatest scourge that can be
inflicted on humanity, and consider that a severity which
is likely to hasten the triumph of one of the contending
parties is the best sort of humanity that can be practised."

He then allyded to the charge that had been brought against him of having, in cold blood, ordered at one time the execution of eighteen persons. These persons, he said, were condemned by the military tribunals, after a marched down to Evans's ferry, attacked a party of Indians patient examination into the charges against them. He had nothing to do with their condemnation. He had the power, indeed, of preventing the execution, but the cirmstances were not such as to make clemency consistent with duty. An example was necessary, and he allowed justice to take its course.

ERUPTION OF MOUNT ÆTNA.

We learn from our correspondent at Malta that on the night of the 20th of Augus Mount Ætna became suddenly convulsed, and a magnificent eruption took place, which has not been surpassed by any within the past

forty years.

An English party from Malta, visiting Catania for the festa, and afterwards the mountain, happened to be as-cending it at the time, and, contrary to the advice of the guides, persisted in their journey, notwithstanding the

premonitory signs of the approaching event.

The party consisted of Capt. Hallett, R. N., Mrs. Hallet, the Misses Sankey, the Hon. Lieut. Finch, of the 68th Light Infantry, and Lieut. Ravenhill, of the Royal Engineers, accompanied by their muleteers, and the usual Sicilian guides. They took their departure late at night from Nicolosi, so as to ensure reaching the summit of the mountain by day-break, in order to enjoy the grandeur of the scene at that particular hour. As they proceeded the wind rose so violently that the guides, fearing some without the scene at the scene at the scene at the particular hour. As they proceeded the wind rose so violently that the guides, fearing some without the scene at the scene at that particular hour. As they proceeded the wind rose so violently that the guides, fearing some without the scene at the scene at that particular hour. As they proceeded the wind rose so violently that the guides, fearing some mishap, recommended them to retrace their steps, but giant arising from his slumber. All of a sudden, when the party was in a narrow pass, mules and riders, male and female, conductors and guides, were precipitated to the ground by an awful blast, and lay rolling over and over among cinders and ashes, whilst at a spot called Colossi, scarce one hundred yards distant from the party, the mountain opened, and burst out with terrific violence, the wind keeping pace and apparently struggling which should roar the loudest. Crawling under a projecting block of lava, the formation of a former eruption, they huddled together for protection from the piercingly cold blast and clouds of acutely sharp dust. The eruption commenced at about 2 t. M.

menced at about 2 A. M. The flames issued in widely-spread sheets from the ummit, but by far the most fearful eruption took place at the foot of the cone, at a spot called the Crater Colosi. This explosion caused the mountain to heave and rock and the liquid lava flowed over from the boiling gulf be neath—minor craters opening from time to time, and forming a grand junction, from which huge masses were The vote polled is large.

thrown up amidst fire and smoke.

Fortunately for the party, the wind blew from then towards the crater, or they must have been inevitably suffocated by the sulpurous fumes, and as it was each moment threatened to be their last. After daybreak, when another terrific explosion and outbreak shook the lofty mountain to its very centre, the party left their re-treat and made their way with difficulty back to Nicolosi. For several days previously torrents of rain had de-scended, and passengers from Messini, by the French steamer which arrived at Malta on the morning of the 25th, report that the volcano was still in activity during the night of the 24th.

DISTRESSING OCCURRENCE.-The Goldsborough (N. C. Republican relates a distressing occurrence in that neigh-borhood, which caused the death of three persons, the wife and two daughters of Mr. Joseph Farrell. On Monday, the 6th instant, Mr. Farrell went out into his corn field to superintend the fodder-getting, leaving his brandy-still, which he had been running during the day, in charge of his wife. During his absence it became necessary to empty the vessel into which the brandy ran from the still, and Mrs. F. and her daughter, followed by her child, still, and Mrs. F. and her daughter, followed by her child, attempted to do so, the young lady carrying a candle to enable them to see. Having emptied the brandy into a barrel, the young lady lifted up the funnel, and said to her mother she would touch the candle to it to see the brandy burn. At this moment the fumes of the brandy were escaping from the bung of the barrel, and the burning drops falling into it from the funnel, an explosion followed, which was heard throughout the neighborhood. Mr. Farrell hastened from the field and found his wife and children enveloped in flames. The child died almost instantly; the young lady at ten o'clock on Wednesday following, and Mrs. Farrell at four o'clock the same evening. Mr. Farrell was also badly burnt while endeaverfollowing, and Mrs. Farrell at four o'clock the same even-ing. Mr. Farrell was also badly burnt while endeaver-ing to extinguish the flames.

CALIFORNIA DESERT.

From a letter of a member of the Mexican Boun-

Junction of the Gila and Colorado Rivers, June 13. It is only by actual experience that one can form any dea of the utter desolation and barrenness of the desert, extending from the Colorado to the coast range of mountains. When we crossed it in February last we had no water for about eighty miles, though now, thanks to the labors of Capt. Davidson, there is a well opened in the coes, under José Maria, have the cold village, and are raising corn a short distance from Tourey's trading-house. The Keachies and their kind red tribes are still residing at the old village, high up on the Brasos. The Lipans have removed to the Colorado.

The MAGYAR.

ply 1.5 seams, the water as the cold plant with the sand. The water at all the wells is hard and brackish, and seems to create thirst rather than allay it. There is not a spear of grass for about one hundred miles, nor any herb age upon which animals can subsist, save the foliage and fruit of the merquit. At present the leaves are in perfection, and the animals get tolerable good browsing, though the young beans are too acrid to afford much nourishment. arroyo of Alamo Mucho, and the longest journada is forty-

much nourishment.

The intense heat renders travel by day almost impossible. We usually ac complish our march between sunset and eight o'clock in the morning, laying by during the day, which is almost as intolerable as travelling; for, with the mercury ranging t. om 112° to 420° in our tents, sleep affords no refreshment, food is disgusting, and reading a fatigue. Generally there is a strong breeze, which, coming from off the heated sands, burns and parches the skin, if it does not bring a cloud of dust to add to the general discomfort.

The Colorado, just below the junction, runs through a short canon in a rocky hill, which forms an abrupt promontory on each side of the river. The post is situated upon the one on the western bank, a most harren, forlorn-looking spot to live in, which must be about equal to exile to Siberia. The officers and men are at present living in tents, which are covered with rude sheds of branches to protect them from the sun. There are about two hundred men here, artillery and infantry, and the post is commanded by Major S. P. Heintzelman. The difficulty of supplying the post with the necessary articles of subsistence prevents the introduction of any thing like luxuries, and officers and men are alike confined to soldier's fare. The command is as comfortably situated as the nature of the place and its inaccessibility will allow the ture of the place and its inaccessibility will allow; but long deprivation of fresh provisions has filled the hospital with scurvy patients, and many of the men were regged and shoeless. A partially successful attempt has been made to supply the post by water. A vessel loaded with supplies was sent up the Gulf of Galifornia and up the river to within about one hundred miles of the post, but the provisions could not be brought in scows, against the strong current, much faster than the command consumed strong current, much taster than the command consumed them. It is now in contemplation to procure a small steamer to bring up supplies from the Gulf, and probably less difficulty will be found in maintaining the post. The eminence upon which the post is situated commands a view of the junction of the Gila and Colorado, and of the latter river for a considerable distance. latter river for a considerable distance. The distant mountain scenery is peculiar, the peaks assuming singu-lar shapes, particularly those known as Chimney Rocks and Capitol Dome. The overflow of the river has completely insulated the post, and it is now only approachable by means of boats.

AN INDIAN FIGHT AND A "TREATY OF PEACE" IN OREGON.

We learn from persons just in from Rogue river that regular pitched battle was fought a few days ago near Table Rock, between a large party of Indians and the Whites. The difficulty grew out of a determination on the part of "Sain," the war chief, to get possession of a little child of Dr. Ambrose, formerly of Vancouver; and upon refusal of Dr. A. to comply with his wishes, the chief demanded three beef cattle to be given him, or the Doctor must leave the valley. conier demanded three beef cattle to be given him, or the Doctor must leave the valley; whereupon the Doctor made the miners at Jacksonville acquainted with the facts and his situation, who immediately formed a company of seventy-five, marched down to Big Bar, and sent for the chief to have a talk and make a treaty. The chief came over, but declined to enter into any terms, and asked for a parley until the next day, with the understanding that, in case he did not come over with his warriors by ten o'clock, the whites might consider it as a declaration of war. The chief came over, but nothing definite could be arranged with him, and, after returning, sent over a party of his warriors. The whites made prisoners of these In-dians as hostages for the good faith of "Sam," the chief. and so many difficulties to contend with. "I regard war," he added, "as the greatest scourge that can be ndicted on humanity, and consider that a severity which is likely to hasten the triumph of one of the contending parties is the best sort of humanity that can be practised." He then alluded to the charge that had been brought gainst him of having, in cold blood ordered at one time. but three or four of the Indians engaged in the contest. marched down to Evans's ferry, attacked a party of Indians encamped there, killed eleven, and captured three of the chief's family. The next day two white men and a Clickatat Indian, who had wandered from the camp, were surrounded by some two hundred Indians. The Clickatat was shot through the body, but is now recovering. The three escaped, after killing several of the "red skins." That night the whites, under the cover of the darkness, surrounded the whole band of Indians in their encampment, and on the approach of daylight mode their encampment. ment, and on the approach of daylight made their appear-ance. The Indians, finding themselves completely sur-rounded, threw away their arms, and upon their knees begged for quarters. The miners complied, and they were all marched over to the Indian agency, when Judge Skinner made a treaty of peace, which was signed by all the chiefs.

NEWS BY TELEGRAPH.

The Maine Election.

PORTLAND, SEPTEMBER 17 .- In two hundred towns the vote for Governor stands: HUBBARD, Temperance Democrat, 29,774; CHANDLER, Anti, 16,164; CROSBY, Whig, 20,614; majority against Hubbard, 7,004. The Senate vention.

the intrepid party, unwilling to be balked in their intentions, persisted in proceeding. Soon afterwards the wind increased, and the mountain began to shake like a plurality upon the Congressional rotes. We have the following returns for Congress, compared

st District	ALL HALL		1852.		1848.	
20,082 20,682 16,054 19,1	d " . th " .	3,868 4,221 4,563 3,282	4,126 4,217 2,371 6,707 2,280	Whig. 2,487 2,298 3,674 4,558 2,236	Dem. 2,903 3,604 2,961 7,851 2,296 970	
	to dolesing extensions		20,682	16,054	19,185 16,054	

These returns comprise about one-half the State. In the fourth and fifth districts two Democratic candidates

Gen. Scott at Harrisburg. HARRISBURG, SEPTEMBER 16.—Gen. Scott arrived here to-day from Baltimore, and dined at the Railroad Hotel. Gov. Bioles and the Heads of the Departments, and a large number of citizens called upon him. The General thanked them in a few pertinent remarks for the kind attention paid him. At two o'clock he took the cars for Pittsburgh, where he makes a brief stay. Notwithstanding that his visit was unexpected, and that about six hundred Whigs had left this neighborhood for the meeting at Lancaster, there was a very large gathering to greet the old hero of an hundred battles, and loud and long were the enthusiastic cheers with which they wel-

comed him to the capital of the old Keystone State. Arrest of Anti-Renters. ALBANY, SEPTEMBER 17 .- Nine Anti-Renters have been rrested on suspicion of being engaged in the recent out rage on Shaw's premises.

The Baltimore Market.

BALTIMORE, SEPTEMBER 17 .- Business continues steady, though breadstuffs are dull. Sales to-day of only 300 bbls. Howard street at \$4.18, more than which cannot inspections are 1,089 hhds. Md. and cool and 1,930 hhds. The stock market firm. Prices steady. Money very easy. Banks discount freely.